



A Critical Study Of Vehicle Sticker And Inscription Texts That Transport Group and Individual Identities in Nigeria

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Abstract ;

Previous studies have focused on vehicle sticker and inscription texts from a wide range of perspectives. They include the stylistic, linguistic and pragmatic analyses of vehicle inscriptions, the transmission of moral and cultural values of sticker texts across borders, vehicle writings as conveyors of humours, slang and witticism and inscription and sticker texts that construct social, political and economic vices that are prevalent in Nigeria. However, none have worked on individual and group identity sticker and inscription texts in relation to agitation, high-handedness, over-bearing manner and all forms of lawlessness in Nigeria. In this paper, we examine individual and group identity sticker and inscription texts that relate to agitation, high-handedness, over-bearing manner and all forms of lawlessness in Nigeria. The Ethnography of Communication forms the kernel of our theoretical framework. Our data include nine pieces of sticker and inscription texts that communicate the inherent identities of the different academic and professional organizations, the perception of the public about the organizations, information from some Nigerian dailies and captions of the popular EndSARS protests in 2020. We argue that group and individual texts on automobiles signal to the reading public a lot about the organizations which include agitation, high-handedness, over-bearing manner and other forms of lawlessness in Nigeria. The paper reveals that what is contained on the bodies of most of the organizations' vehicles does not always reflect the activities of such organizations.

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1. *Introduction*

The idea of posting stickers or writing inscriptions on certain parts of the bodies of vehicles in Nigeria has become widespread in recent times. So widespread is the fashion among both private and commercial vehicles that it has become a commonplace phenomenon among vehicle operators in Nigeria (see Jordan, 1978; Ajani, 1999; Chiluwa, 2008; Nwagbara, 2008; Faniran, et. al. 2019; 2020, 2021). The ubiquity of branded vehicles is equally noticeable on the streets and highways of Nigerian roads. The posting of stickers and writing of inscriptions on vehicles as well as the branding of automobiles, apart from serving aesthetic functions, are a remarkable means of communication. As communicative artefacts, they transmit a variety of messages to the public which can be divided into different categories. There are some that discuss the stylistic, linguistic and pragmatic contents of vehicle inscription and sticker texts (see Ajani, 1999; Chiluwa, 2008; Nwagbara, 2008). Some examine the utilitarian functions of vehicle inscription and sticker texts that include artistic and linguistic dimensions (see Faniran, Ikotun, and Abiodun, 2019) while a few others discuss vehicle writings as media of transporting moral and cultural values across borders (see Faniran, Ikotun and Oloyede, 2020). There are still some that focus on vehicle writings as conveyors of humour, slang and witticism (see Faniran, et. al. 2021). However, none have discussed individual and group identity inscription and sticker texts with reference to agitation, high-handedness, over-bearing manner and other forms of lawlessness in Nigeria. In this

paper, we discuss individual and group identity inscription and sticker texts in relation to agitation, high-handedness, over-bearing manner and all forms of lawlessness in Nigeria.

Some Previous Studies

A number of studies on inscription and sticker texts have been published in journals and dissertations. For instance, Ajani (1999), in his study, examines the utilitarian function of vehicle stickers in Oyo State from the stylistic perspective. He examines how such stylistic properties as syntax, phonology, and graphology are capable of enhancing the aesthetic quality of car stickers. Similarly, he also examines some of the social functions of car sticker texts, noting that transporting the emblems about by cars makes the texts themselves 'vehicles' for social discourse. Faniran et. al. (2019) x-ray the utilitarian function and nature of vehicle inscriptions and stickers in South-western Nigeria. They trace the history of the use of vehicle writings in Nigeria in general and the Southwest in particular. The paper chronicles their long history of usage, noting that it is a common phenomenon among vehicle operators to inscribe messages and post stickers on vehicles, most especially the commercial ones. In another study, Faniran et. al. (2020) examine the transmission of moral and cultural values of inscription and sticker texts across the Southwest of Nigeria. In the paper, they do an extensive discourse into the communicative powers of writings on vehicles. They argue that apart from merely adorning the bodies of vehicles, vehicle insignia are also capable of constructing moral and cultural values which impact edifying messages that can help in re-directing and re-orientating the

psyche of the reading public in a morally degenerate society. We agree with Ajani (1999) and Faniran et. al. (2019; 2020) that vehicle stickers and inscriptions play significant roles in communication dissemination to the public on a variety of discourses. However, none of the previous researchers have discussed individual and group identity inscription and sticker texts with particular reference to agitation, high-handedness, over-bearing manner and all forms of lawlessness in Nigeria. In this paper, therefore, we discuss individual and group identity inscription and sticker texts in relation to agitation, high-handedness, over-bearing manner and all forms of lawlessness in Nigeria.

Data Collection

The Ethnography of Communication propounded by Hymes (1962) formed the basis of our theoretical framework. Nine pieces of sticker and inscription texts that communicated the inherent identities of the different academic and professional organizations as well as the perception of the public about the organizations were used as part of our data. Some Nigerian dailies were also consulted. The Nigerian dailies included: "The Nation", March 18, 2009, "The Nation", May 29, 2013, p. 7, "The Nation", November 10, and 12, 2013, pp. 6 and 4, "The Nation", March 7, 2016, p. 7, "The Nation", Thursday March 17, 2016, p. 6, "The Nation", April 25, and 26, 2016, pp. 2 and 3, "The Nation", May 2, 2016, p. 45, "The Punch", March 18, 2009, pp. 5 and 6, "The Punch", March 13, 2013, p. 5, "The Punch", November 6, 2013, p. 4, "The Punch", December 17, 2013, p. 4, "The Punch", March 3, 2014, p. 3, "The Punch", July 16, 2014, p. 7, "The Punch", September

24, 2015, p. 13, "The Punch", February 26, 2016, p. 9, "The Punch", March 7, 2016, p. 6, "The Punch", April 25, 2016, p. 4, "The Punch", July 4, 2016, "Tribune", March 10, 2013, p. 7, "Tribune", April 25, 2016, p. 8, and Vanguardngr.com/2018/09/6. Some pieces of information were similarly drawn from the popular EndSARS (End Special Anti-Robbery Squad) protests of 2020.

Data Presentation and Data Analysis

Inscriptions and stickers that construct individual or group identity are common on the windscreens or bodies of vehicles. As an eloquent imprint mostly on vehicles owned by organisations and government agencies, the act of inscribing or posting messages on vehicles to depict group/identity has become an index of popular culture in Nigeria. Organisations as well as government agencies brand their vehicles for the purpose of identity. This idea of branding the vehicles as a method of displaying individual or group identity through the use of vehicle inscriptions and stickers is one of the most fundamental ways of establishing the identity of a worker in relation to his/her workplace as well as shaping other people's views of who such individuals, organizations and government agencies are. We have such inscriptions on vehicles that belong to educational institutions, health institutions, government agencies and private enterprises. The branding of vehicles is meant to display the identities of those institutions as well as the kinds of services they render to the general public. For, whenever vehicle inscriptions are used to communicate identity, it is certain that membership of one or more identity groups is depicted, either as part of a group of users of a certain linguistic variety, a certain social

class, age group, educational background or religious affiliation. So, it is hardly ever possible to communicate using the vehicle writings without disclosing at least some of this information about one's identity. This use of language in vehicle writings to depict users' identities or the identities of the organizations which they represent will form the basis of our next analysis.

Our first analysis that reveals the identities of the users and the organisations that they represent is the domain of the legion of Clergy/Imam. The inscription or sticker depicts the religious identity of the user as either a Christian or a Muslim. It is a discursive strategy used on any vehicle that belongs to a priest, minister of a religion or a religious leader. For instance, the vehicle inscription or sticker texts, 'Imam' and 'Clergy' are terms used for all ministers of God of Christian and Muslim extractions. In the Nigerian society, religious leaders are highly venerated. They are treated with the deference which their calling demands. The veneration with which they are accorded is in conformity with the Biblical injunction which says, 'touch not my anointed and do my prophet no harm' (Ps. 105: 15, p. 535, RSV). Both the Bible and the Quran forbid any one from either assaulting or using disparaging remarks on any servants of God because they are believed to be representatives of God on earth. Expectedly, the driver of the vehicle that carries this inscription or sticker is always accorded honour and respect, both by members of the religious groups to which they belong and law enforcement agents. For instance, it is common among some members of certain religious groups or denominations to say with an air of pride, *Mòtò Ààfáà wa ló ñ bò yẹn* meaning 'Behold, our Pastor/Imam's

vehicle is approaching' whenever they sight their spiritual leaders' vehicles. The expression underscores the high esteem and veneration with which the Christian or Muslim faithful hold their spiritual leaders. Moreover, operators of vehicles that carry the emblem of either 'Clergy' or 'Imam' are usually insulated from seemingly interminable police check-points on the road. Thus, drivers of such vehicles are usually given a clean bill of health by security agents like the Nigerian Customs Services, the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), the Vehicle Inspection Officers (VIO) or the Nigeria Police. Whether or not the driver of such a vehicle is a clergy or a Muslim cleric, the vehicle on which the writing is constructed always enjoys certain favours and social security which are not available to other vehicles.

Paradoxically, it is common to observe that vehicles that carry the sticker or inscription with the caption 'Clergy' or 'Imam' are often found to be used by people who are anything but pious. Criminals sometimes use the stickers bearing the highly reverent insignia on their vehicles to deceive unsuspecting reading public into believing that automobiles with those inscriptions actually belong to a Christian/Islamic group whereas they are used to perpetrate heinous crimes. There was, for example, a reported case of a gang of abductors in Ògùn State that used a Toyota Sienna bus marked 'Clergy' for child trafficking before their vehicle was later intercepted along Ajílété area of Ògùn State by men of the anti-crime squad. More often than not, tricksters, fraudsters and swindlers post or inscribe the writing on their vehicles to insulate themselves from security agents, whereas they use such vehicles principally to

defraud or swindle their unsuspecting victims of their fortunes or to violate traffic rules and regulations. Also, vehicles with no valid vehicle papers or drivers whose licences have expired or who do not even have at all usually use the vehicles so branded with religious insignia to escape from the long arms of the law and get away from being arrested.

This intolerable level of impunity perpetrated by the users of vehicles marked 'Clergy' or 'Imam' is not limited to the ministers of God alone. Other segments of the nation's professional bodies like the Navy, the Army and the Police are also culpable. Essentially, there are three organs of a nation's armed forces: the army, the air force and the navy. Men and officers of any of the three organs are especially trained to be combat-ready to protect the territorial integrity of their country and quell internal insurrection. The vehicle insignia that bears 'Navy' is believed to be used by members of a country's armed forces that fight at sea. Every naval officer, like his/her counterpart either in the army or the air force, commands admiration and respect, on the one hand, and awe, on the other hand, from the public. They are admired because of their impeccable and spotless navy blue uniforms which stand them out while they are feared by the public because of their long history of brutality and gross human rights abuses. Their appearance is not, however, the concern of this discourse. Rather, we want to show how the identity of the users of the vehicles marked 'Navy' or 'Army' or 'Air force' is portrayed by the public in the society. Ordinarily, because of the sensitive nature of their profession, any vehicle that carries the inscription or sticker tagged

'Navy' or 'Army' or 'Air force' is always given a special treatment even by any of the motor traffic organs. For instance, a vehicle with 'Navy' or 'Army' or 'Air force' embossed on it usually enjoys the liberty of not being subjected to routine checks at check points. The driver of such a vehicle is allowed free movement even in the midst of thick gridlock. Never will he be subjected to the agony or rigour of having his vehicle particulars' papers scrutinized. But, the privileges are often times abused by users of the vehicles on which the insignia is embossed and also from the general public who are not members of the naval or 'army' or 'air force' base, but still use the vehicle writing to wriggle their way from the encumbrance of traffic wardens as well as perpetrate other forms of lawlessness. Most drivers of the vehicles that are marked 'Navy' or 'Army' or 'Air force' use such vehicles for all sorts of unwholesome activities. They use such vehicles to beat traffic lights, disrupt peaceful social gatherings or even mastermind mayhem in communities through reckless driving and their characteristic over-bearing manner.

It is worth mentioning that causes of military officers' high-handedness and over-zealous manner have been variously reported in the national dailies as well as the social media across the country. A case in point is that of a naval officer who, on November 8th 2008 in Lagos, was reported to have beaten up a young lady to a state of coma in the full glare of a helpless and petrified crowd who could not rescue the hapless lady from the vicious grip of the bestial naval officer (see <http://www.nairaland.com/191814/naval-officers-beat-up-lady/8> accessed on

November 15th 2015). 'The Daily Independent' of September 27, 2015, p. 2 also reported that the Lagos State House of Assembly set up an adhoc committee to investigate alleged human rights abuse by naval ratings which occurred in Majidun area of Ikorodu, Lagos (see <http://allafrica.com/stories/201509282807.html> accessed on November 15th 2015). The naval ratings, according to the paper, were alleged to have engaged in 'various nefarious activities such as maiming, raping and harassment of innocent people on the pretext of looking for oil thieves', actions which later prompted the Lagos State House of Assembly, in response to a petition written by the Majidun Community, to set up a four-man committee to look into the allegation and recommend appropriate steps to address the issue (see also <http://allafrica.com/stories> accessed on November 15th 2015). Reports of the high-handedness of the naval officers have even got to the notice of the international body when a human rights group in Nigeria decided to petition an international organization over the high rate of gross indiscipline and lawlessness among the naval ratings. The seemingly absolute freedom from prosecution which they enjoy and the impunity with which they operate have encouraged some private vehicle owners who are closely related to any military officer to request for sticker emblem with the inscription, 'Navy' or 'Army' or 'Air Force' to be posted on the windscreens of their vehicles so that they can enjoy unfettered freedom from the long arms of the law. It is generally believed that the posting of the military emblem is capable of insulating operators of such vehicles from being stopped on the road by law

enforcement agents. The Nigeria Police are also culpable. Many of them are guilty of lawlessness for which some of the naval or 'Army' or 'Air force' ratings are culpable. The Nigeria Police is an official organization whose job is to make people obey the law. They are also responsible for the prevention and detection of crime and the protection of lives, properties, apprehension of offenders and the preservation of law and order. In civilized and developed countries, the police are known to be civil and above board in their discharge of those cardinal civic responsibilities, and public opinions towards them are generally high. In those countries, the organization's maxim: 'The Police is your friend' is held sacrosanct. Those are countries where the rights of the public are not trampled on, where the citizens are not subjected to unmitigated torture and where the rules of law are strictly observed. In Nigeria, although the police are saddled with similar responsibilities of enforcing law and order, their discharge of those duties calls to question the credibility of the force. This is as a result of the illegal, excessive and unlawful exercise of power by members of the force coupled with their proclivity for corrupt practices. Owing to the endemic corruption that seeps through the security organization, the public image of the Nigeria Police has continued to be a major source of worry to successive governments in the country. Many an innocent soul has fallen victims from the hands of trigger-happy, over-zealous Nigerian cops. Several cases of extra-judicial killings by the police have, on several occasions, been reported in the dailies. These cases are a litany, and, a number of those killings often resulted either from motorists and commercial motorcyclists' refusal to part with bribe

which the Nigeria Police are reputed to often demand for at check-points or from cops' maniacal thirst for blood from innocent citizens. One of such cases is a mother of four children who was gunned down by a police constable right in the presence of her children. The deceased woman, her husband and children were reported to be returning from church in Kẹkẹ Marwa (tricycle) when a group of police men on "stop-and-search" operation stopped the tricycle. Tragedy reportedly struck a few minutes after the woman's husband was stopped and a lethal bullet released from the barrel of the gun of one of the trigger happy corps pierced the wife through the back of her head. The poor woman was reported to have died instantly. The same bullet was said to have hit the husband but did not claim his life. The paper reported that trouble started when the police man allegedly demanded a fifty naira bribe from the man. But, the explanation by the man that the occupants in the tricycle were members of his family fell on the police officer's deaf ears (see <http://www.naij.com/20thDec., 2015> accessed on April 11, 2016).

Another case which confirms the uncanny brutality of some of the men and officers of the Nigeria Police was the killing of a 39-year-old man who died in police custody after he had allegedly been accused of 'cloning' the phone number of the current Lagos State Governor (see *The Nation*, May 2, 2016, p. 44). The case of a 19-year-old barber who was alleged to have died after several orgies of torture in the hands of the police at the Denton Police Station, Lagos is still fresh. The sympathy which the late barber's death drew from the public emanated from the fact that the police were

said to have found no incriminating evidence against him. The police allegedly continually beat him until he passed out. Even when the barber was reported to have become unconscious as a result of the beatings he had received from the police, the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) was quoted as having said that the suspect was merely pretending (see *The Nation*, May 2, 2016, p. 45 accessed on July 28, 2016). Another case is that of the brutal killing of a 400-Level student of Èkìtì State University, Adó-Èkìtì who was allegedly shot dead by a trigger-happy cop. The murdered student was on his way to the campus of his institution to pay his school fee when the killer cop allegedly shot the boy as the driver of the vehicle in which the boy was travelling had refused to offer a twenty naira bribe to the cop (see *Sunday Tribune*, March 10, 2013, p. 7 and *The Punch*, Wednesday March 13, 2013, p. 5).

The last among the litany of such cases of police brutality which earns the security outfit a negative perception from the public was the alleged murder of a final year student of the University of Benin by a police DPO on May 27, 2013 (see *The Nation*, May 29, 2013, p. 7). The late student was allegedly shot by the DPO on that fateful day and hurriedly buried in a shallow grave the following day. But, nemesis later caught up with the killer cop when his dastardly act was uncovered. This led to a peaceful protest by the students of the University to the Government House in Benin to demand for justice. The list of such police brutality is, in fact, endless. With all the above-mentioned bizarre and blood-curdling cases of police brutality, it is incontestable that inscriptions and stickers on the body of any police van is likely to generate negative reactions from the public.

seeped to other major towns and cities of the country. The two-week- nation-wide protest did not end without many casualties from the public and the security agents. It was reported that no fewer than 22 policemen, 7 soldiers and 59 civilians lost their lives in the mayhem. Following the crisis, some commissions of enquiries established across the country recommended some financial palliatives to the victims of the nation-wide EndSARS protests (see <https://www.bbc.com>; <https://www.vanguardngr.com>).

Another vehicle inscription and sticker text that depicts group identity and which conveys underlying profound messages to the public about an organization is that of the Nigerian motor union under the umbrella of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW). The NURTW is the umbrella body of the trade union of road transport workers in Nigeria. The union has its branches across the country, and some of its functions are to monitor the activities of its members and promote the welfare of its members. The union is also set up to ensure that there is peace at all the motor parks. But, it is paradoxical that some of the activities of a few of their members at the motor parks negate the objectives for which the Union was established. The public image of some of the members is negative. Consequently, any vehicle that carries the inscription NURTW is always perceived in bad light because of the particular identity which members of the union convey to the public. They represent a social class of aggressive, belligerent and impatient people. Sometimes, some of them constitute a horde of pawns or thugs in the hands of politicians. Consequently, some motor-parks across the nation have become bedlam as many of

those places are hotbeds of unsavoury activities from some of the members of the union at the parks. For instance, a few cases of altercations and skirmishes among rival union members are still fresh in memory. The protracted feuds between two rival groups of the NURTW in Ibadan, Oyo State on June 2014 which were reported to have claimed several lives cannot be forgotten too soon. The protracted mayhem which was alleged to have been politically motivated eventually led to the gruesome killing of one of the NURTW's leaders and the destruction of property worth millions of naira during the period that the mayhem lasted. A nauseating twist to many of the feuds is that often times, the NURTW members have become easy tools in the hands of self-serving and greedy politicians. Many politicians often use some of the members of this trade union as mere cannon fodder to feather their political nests, especially in settling political scores against their main political rivals. The aftermath of such crises has always resulted in colossal loss of property and innocent lives as well as the proscription of the Union as we have had, at one time or the other, in Oyo, Ogun, Kwara and Ondo states (see The Punch, July 16, 2014, p. 7 and The Punch, September 24, 2015, p. 13 respectively).

Among those whose identities affect the perceptions of the public are students of tertiary institutions and their lecturers. For example, inscription and sticker text with 'Aluta Missiles' or 'ASUU' posted on a vehicle attracts differing opinions across the sections of the public. The presence of a vehicle marked 'Students Union Government' (SUG) with students occupying the vehicle is often greeted with

mixed feelings by the general public. This is so because students, characteristically, are notorious for their penchant to foment trouble at the slightest provocation all in the name of seeking redress from perceived injustice. Their characteristic tendency to evoke the enigmatic and belligerent spirit of 'aluta' and provoke aggression may, perhaps, not have been unconnected with the problems typical of, or associated with, their age, moral and academic levels. Many of their 'alutas' or protests often end up either in destruction of property or even loss of lives. Several institutions of higher learning have had their fair share of the belligerent nature of the students which usually lead to closure of such institutions to forestall total break-down of law and order. Therefore, the presence of a vehicle either owned by the Students Union Government (SUG) of an institution or is hired for a purpose often sends jitters down the spines of the public as there have been cases of students' unrests across the ivory towers in the country because of the volatile nature of students across the Nation's tertiary institutions. A case in point was that of a group of Students Union Government Executives from a state-owned tertiary institution in Oṣun State which on, September 28, 2005, left their campus for their annual congress at the Polytechnic, Ìbàdàn. At the end of their meeting with other Students Union Government Executives from other institutions, the group, on their return journey, commanded the driver to drive into a filling station in Ìbàdàn to fuel their vehicle. In a commando-like manner, the vehicle operator ordered fifty litres of the premium motor spirit (petrol) from the filling station attendant. After the petrol attendant had dispensed the fuel, she

requested for money from the driver of the SUG vehicle. But, to her shock, the driver of the SUG vehicle, a student himself, sped off without paying for the cost of the petrol. It was the inscription on the vehicle which later gave away the identities of the students' group. The manager of the filling station, who happened to be a native of the town in which the institution was sited, later traced the students' group to their campus to lodge a complaint to the College authorities consequent upon which the students were tried by the Students' Disciplinary Committee of the Institution. Therefore, the presence of the vehicle marked 'SUG', either owned by the Students Union Government of an institution or is hired for an outing, usually gives a sense of misgivings and apprehensions from the public because of the characteristically volatile and belligerent nature of students.

On the contrary, members of the Association known as the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) are not known for the kind of unruly conduct for which either the police, the NURTW or the SUG are known. Most often, they display a high sense civility and responsibility to the public. The civil conduct of the members of the Union may not be unconnected with their relative level of maturity and acquisition of intellectual knowledge. However, in spite of their social and intellectual pedigree in the society, the vehicle on which the sticker label 'ASUU' is posted sends ambivalent messages to the public. In other words, the public express ambivalent attitude towards the individual or group that is associated with the Union. ASUU, which is the acronym for Academic Staff Union of Universities, is an academic union whose primary objective is to promote education

and learning. Owners of the vehicles that bear the insignia 'ASUU' are believed to be members of the academic union of a particular university in Nigeria except, of course, such vehicles are used by individuals other than the owners. One fact about the members of the association is that both the government and the public express ambivalent attitudes towards them. On the one hand, because of their high level of intellectual prowess, they are respected even to the level of veneration. They are every nation's egg-heads as well as the cream of the society. As a result of their profound scholarly pedigree, they are often appointed into high and very sensitive positions where crucial national and global decisions are taken. For instance, they are chief executives in the nation's tertiary institutions; they sometimes occupy ministerial positions in key and strategic ministries and they also constitute the think-tank in the nation's quest for social, political and economic transformation. As a consequence of all these facts, users of vehicles that carry the inscription 'ASUU' are often treated with some level of courtesy by any of the nation's security agents. They are mostly insulated from the encumbrances that characterise most check-points on the road. Sometimes, when an ASUU-branded vehicle is parked, passers-by are wont to remark jocularly thus, *Mòtò igí ìwé, gbòngbò ìmò!* ([Behold] the vehicle of book of trees and roots of knowledge!), referring to the prodigious knowledge an academic is imbued with.

In contradistinction to the respect and reverence with which the user of the vehicle marked 'ASUU' receives from the public is the apprehension which usually greets the presence of a member of ASUU or the

vehicle of the user of the insignia. The general public believe that university academic staffs are the classical Oliver Twist who will always demand for more wages and better conditions of service from government. So, the public see them as the ever insatiable group of the intelligentsia, always 'troubling' the government for wage increase. They are, therefore, feared by the public because of the furore that is always generated whenever they threaten to go on strike. For, anytime the leadership of ASUU threatens to embark on work cessation, fear usually grips both the government and the public especially parents whose wards are in the university because of the negative effect such a strike is likely to have on the students. The perlocutionary effect of the inscription 'ASUU' on the readers is that of admiration, on the one hand, to have seen the vehicle of a member of the ivory tower who is so amazingly endowed with prodigious intellectual ebullience and, scorn and indignation, on the other, to have come across the car of a member of the academia whose stock-in-trade is incessant requests for increased wages as well as their inexorable proclivity for trade disputes with the government, the effect of which is usually an elongation of students' stay on campus. The above instances explicitly adumbrate how vehicle inscription and sticker texts can display the identities of the users in relation to the social, educational and religious backgrounds of the users. For, when we use language, we do so as individuals with social histories which are defined by our membership in a range of the social groups into which we belong.

Conclusion

We have examined individual and group identity sticker and inscription texts in relation to agitation, high-handedness, overbearing manner and all forms of lawlessness in Nigeria. We have shown that there are at least four categories of individual and group identity sticker and inscription texts namely the SUG, the ASUU, the NURTW and the Armed Forces. We have argued that the presence of a vehicle marked 'Students Union Government' (SUG) with students occupying the vehicle is often greeted with mixed feelings by the general public because students, characteristically, are notorious for their penchant to foment trouble at the slightest provocation all in the name of seeking redress from perceived injustice, and that their characteristic tendency to evoke the enigmatic and belligerent spirit of provoking aggression may, perhaps, not have been unconnected with the problems typical of, or associated with, their age, moral and academic levels as their protests often end up either in destruction of property or, sometimes, loss of lives. We have also shown that in contradistinction to the respect and reverence with which the user of the vehicle marked 'ASUU' receives from the public is the apprehension which usually greets the presence of a member of ASUU or the vehicle of the user of the insignia as the general public believe that university academic staffs are the classical Oliver Twist who will always demand for more wages and better conditions of service from government and so, the public see them as the ever insatiable group of the intelligentsia, always 'troubling' the government for wage increase and are, therefore, feared by the public because of the furore that is always

generated whenever they threaten to go on strike.

Similarly, we have submitted that the public image of some NURTW members is negative and any vehicle that carries the inscription NURTW is always perceived in bad light because of the particular identity which members of the union convey to the public in that they represent a social class of aggressive, belligerent and impatient people and some of them constitute a horde of pawns or thugs in the hands of politicians and that some motor-parks across the nation have become bedlam as many of those places are hotbeds of unsavoury activities from some of the members of the union at the parks and the aftermath of such crises has always resulted in colossal loss of property and innocent lives. We have submitted also that the nation's professional bodies like the Navy, the Army, the Air Force and the Police are feared by the public because of their history of brutality and gross human rights abuses and that, although the police are saddled with the responsibilities of enforcing law and order, their discharge of those duties calls to question the credibility of the force as a result of the illegal, excessive and unlawful exercise of power by members of the force coupled with their proclivity towards corrupt practices cumulating in the EndSARS protests of October, 2020. Our observation from this paper reveals that what is contained on the bodies of most of the organizations' vehicles does not always reflect the activities of such organizations.

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